

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

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MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: PRESS LEAK ON INFORMAL SESSIONS

VIENNA NEWSPAPER DIE PRESSE OF APRIL 11, 1974, CARRIES A REPORT ON THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS WHICH CONTAINS SOME LEAKS FROM INFORMAL EAST-WEST SESSIONS, INCLUDING AN ASSESSMENT THAT TALKS ARE MOVING TOWARDS FOCUS ON US-SOVIET REDUCTIONS, MENTION OF EASTERN SYMBOLIC REDUCTION PROPOSAL, AND REFERENCE TO EASTERN HINT ABOUT NUCLEAR FREEZE. AUTHOR OF PIECE IS ENGLEBERT WASHIETL WHO WAS FREQUENT SOURCE OF PRESS LEAKS DURING EXPLORATORY TALKS. WASHIETL HAS COMPANION EDITORIAL IN SAME EDITION ATTACKING THE NEGOTIATIONS AS EITHER MOVE TOWARDS AMERICAN-SOVIET

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CONDOMINIUM OR GROWING SOVIET DOMINATION OVER WESTERN EUROPE.

BEGIN TEXT:

TROOP REDUCTION PLAN IN HIGH GEAR: KREMLIN WOULD LIKE TO GET
EUROPEANS TO MOVE TOWARDS ONE-PERCETN REDUCTION

1. WHEN THE VIENNA TROOP REDUCTION CONFERENCE TAKES UP ITS
WORK AGAIN DURING THE WEEK OF MAY 6, IT WILL IN ONE FELL SWOOP
ENTER INTO A CRITICAL PHASE. ALTHOUGH PRESS CONFERENCES,
HELD BY THE WARSAW PACT AND NATO REPRESENTATIVES ON TUESDAY
AND WEDNESDAY, REVEALED AN APPARENT INABILITY TO AGREE ON
STANDPOINTS, THE EAST BLOCK STATES MIGHT COME OUT WITH A PRECISE
"COMPROMISE AGREEMENT" AFTER THE EASTER RECESS, A COMPROMISE
WHOSE ELEMENTS HAVE ALREADY PLAYED A ROLE IN THE INFORMAL
CONTACTS TO DATE. THE CENTRAL ASPECTS OF THIS WILL BE:
DISARMAMENT MEASURES BY THE TWO SUPER POWERS WITH CONCIMITANT
SYMBOLIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE REMAINING STATES, A FREEZE ON
TROOP STRENGTH, AND AN ORAL REFERENCE TO ATOMIC REDUCTION.

2. JUST AS AMBASSADOR STRULAK HAD DONE A DAY EARLIER IN THE
NAME OF THE EAST BLOCK STATES, NETHERLAND'S CHIEF DELEGATE
THE THE VIENNA TROOP REDUCTION NEGOTIATIONS, QUARLES VAN
UFFORD, HELD FAST IN A SECOND PRESS CONFERENCE ON WEDNESDAY
TO PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED NEGOTIATING POSITIONS. HE REPEATED
THAT NATO WAS IN FAVOR OF A U.S. AND SOVIET GROUND FORCES
REDUCTION, AND THAT DISARMEMENT MEASURES OF THE STATES IN THE
REMAINING AREA OF REDUCTIONS IN CENTRAL EUROPE ARE RESERVED
FOR A SECOND PHASE WHICH IS TO RESULT IN A "COMMON CEILING",
THAT IS AN UPPER LIMIT ON FORCES STRENGTH. FURTHERMORE,
VAN UFFORD STRESSED THAT "WE BELIEVE THAT REDUCTIONS OF AIR
AND NUCLEAR FORCES, BE THEY LARGE OR SMALL, WOULD NOT ASSIST
US IN REACHING THE GOAL OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS."

3. THE EAST BLOCK VERSION TAKES AN EXACTLY OPPOSING VIEW,
WITH PERHAPS ONE FLICKER OF HOPE BY NOT STRICTLY REJECTING
OUT OF HAND THE "STEP-BY-STEP" METHOD.

4. SINCE MOSCOW OBVIOUSLY THINKS IT IS ESSENTIAL TO HAVE
THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, AND THE GERMAN BUNDESWEHR FIRST AND
FOREMOST, PARTICIPATE IN A REDUCTION OF THE MILITARY POTENTIAL
FROM THE VERY FIRST MOMENT, DELEGATION CIRCLES EXPECT THAT
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RIGHT AFTER EASTER THE EAST WILL OFFER A SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR
BRIDGING THE GAP. IN THIS, MOSCOW WOULD GIVE UP THE DEMAND FOR
A REDUCTION OF 20,000 MEN ON EACH SIDE IN THE FIRST PHASE,
AND WOULD INSTEAD OFFER A MORE SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE SUPER POWERS. BUT THIS WILL CONTAIN AN INJUNCTION, NAMELY
THAT THE EUROPEANS CONCOMITANTLY MAKE A SYMBOLIC CONTRIBUTION
IN THE MAGNITUDE OF ROUGHLY ONE PER CENT OF THEIR (FORCES)
POTENTIAL. THE LOGICAL RESULT WOULD BE A FREEZE ON TROOP STRENGTH

IN THE REDUCTION AREA UNTIL FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WOULD RESULT
IN NEW ARRANGEMENT.

5. THE SECOND PROBLEM, THE WESTERN REFUSAL TO INCLUDE THE
NUCLEAR POTENTIAL IN AN AGREEMENT, WOULD BE CONCEIVABLY
HANDLED BY MOSCOW, ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, THROUGH A
VERBAL OR ORAL REFERENCE TO THE NECESSITY OF SUCH REDUCTIONS.

6. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT IT WOULD BE RELATIVELY EASY FOR
MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON TO ACHIEVE AN AGREEMENT ON MUTUAL
REDUCTION MEASURES, PARTICULARLY SINCE A SUMMIT MEETING BETWEEN
PRESIDENT NIXON AND CPSU-CHIEF BREZHNEV IS IN THE OFFING. IN THE
MEANTIME, MOSCOW'S PROPAGANDA EFFORT IS AIMED AT CONVINCING
THE EUROPEAN NATO STATES THAT THEY COULD INDEED TAKE THE
ROAD TO SUCH PROPOSALS. INITIATIVES IN THIS DIRECTION ARE ALSO
TO EMERGE FROM THE PENDING EAST BLOC SUMMIT IN THE FRAMEWORK
FO THE WARSAW PACT POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL. END TEXT.
HUMES

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